

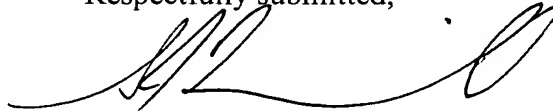
**REMARKS**

In the Notice of Allowability dated January 9, 2004, the Examiner acknowledged Applicants reply of September 29, 2003 but did not mention the supplemental reply which was filed on November 25, 2003. The Examiner later confirmed with the undersigned in a telephone conference on March 23, 2004 that indeed the supplemental reply filed on November 25, 2003 was considered and would be entered as proposed by the Applicants.

Upon review of the supplemental reply, it became clear that there were several instances of text overlap in Claims 1 and 14. Accordingly, Applicants are hereby amending Claims 1 and 14 to eliminate these instances of text overlap. Applicants submit that this amendment addresses only issues of formality and does not, in any way, raise issues of patentability.

An early and favorable response to this reply is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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